

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 13, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554

UCB
ICC
USF-GEN
893

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to you regarding the Federal Communication Commission's proposals to reform the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation (ICC) system. We have heard considerable concern from rural telecommunication providers in our states and ask you to address these concerns before moving forward with your rulemaking process.

As representatives from South Dakota and North Dakota, which include some of the most remote, hard-to-reach areas of our country, we appreciate the FCC's efforts to expand broadband service coverage, and to make these programs more accountable and broadband-focused. However, it is equally critical that such reforms sustain the broadband service that is currently available and do not unintentionally threaten and hamper investment in rural communities.

Small, community-based communication providers in rural areas have invested millions of dollars in communications networks supported not only by universal service, but also by private investment and federal loan programs. It is in the interest of our constituents, as well as federal taxpayers, that the FCC modernize these programs while preserving the successful mechanisms that will protect investments and provide for the continued expansion of quality and affordable broadband service in rural America. While we recognize the need to modify USF and ICC, we hope the FCC recognizes the important role the current system has played in helping our country live up to the statutory objectives of universal service.

Robust broadband service is especially vital in rural areas where business, education, and health care are more difficult to access. The decisions you and your colleagues make as the reform process moves forward will have significant, long-term implications on the quality of life for the rural communities we represent. Therefore, we would appreciate an explanation regarding how any final rulemaking will not only expand broadband to those who do not have it, but will also sustain and enhance the service many of our constituents already receive.

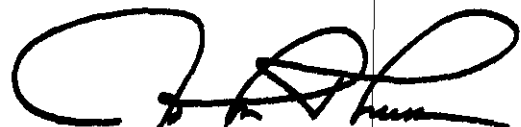
Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you.

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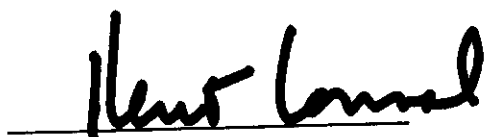
Sincerely,



Tim Johnson
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator



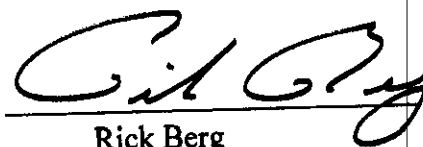
Kent Conrad
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



Kristi Noem
United States Representative



Rick Berg
United States Representative

cc: Commissioner Copps
Commissioner McDowell
Commissioner Clyburn



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Rick Berg
U.S. House of Representatives
323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Berg:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

On October 27, after many years of hard work on Capitol Hill, among the FCC's Commissioners, and by Commission staff, the Commission unanimously adopted a comprehensive Order overhauling the broken and backward-looking USF and ICC systems for the Internet age. By transitioning these programs to the Connect America Fund, we are delivering on our shared national goal of universal voice and broadband service – including universal mobile voice and broadband service – and enabling increased private sector investment in the indispensable infrastructure of the 21st century: broadband. Importantly, our reforms are fiscally responsible, eliminating waste and inefficiency, using market-based mechanisms to target support where it is needed, and putting the Fund on a firm budget.

The Commission's Order will create jobs beginning in 2012, and lay the foundation for enduring job creation, economic growth, and U.S. global competitiveness for years to come.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Order's "Executive Summary." Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Julius Genachowski

Enclosure



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Kent Conrad
United States Senate
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Conrad:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

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Julius Genachowski

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable John Hoeven
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hoeven:

Thank you very much for your letters regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

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JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
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November 17, 2011

The Honorable Tim Johnson
United States Senate
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Johnson:

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JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Kristi Noem
U.S. House of Representatives
226 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Noem:

Thank you very much for your letters regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable John R. Thune
United States Senate
493 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Thune:

Thank you very much for your letters regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

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